

VZCZCXRO4651  
OO RUEHCN RUEHGH  
DE RUEHBJ #3023 1711120  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 201120Z JUN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9685  
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 013023

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/20/2031  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: HENAN STUDENTS RANSACK COLLEGE CAMPUS

REF: A. FBIS CPP20060619488002  
[1](#)B. FBIS CPP 20060620710004  
[1](#)C. BEIJING 8479

Classified By: Classified by Acting Political Internal Unit  
Chief Susan A. Thornton. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) Post has confirmed foreign news reports that thousands of students at Shengda Economics, Trade and Management College in Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan Province, engaged in violent demonstrations in recent days. Quiet has been restored on campus, according to a journalist named Zhang (who declined to give her first name) at Dongfang Jinbao, a local Zhengzhou newspaper. She told Poloff that students protested to show their dissatisfaction with the school, adding that only a few participated in the severe acts of vandalism about which western media is reporting. Zhang said her newspaper has been prohibited from publishing articles on the protests. Mainland media have not reported on the story and searches of local websites by Embassy staff turned up no internet chatter on the subject. Meanwhile, a Shengda University telephone operator who did not want to be identified said protest activity is continuing on campus.

[1](#)2. (C) The overseas Chinese Internet news portal Wenxue City reported June 19 that thousands of Shengda University students protested against the school administration on June 15-16. The reports (refs A,B) indicated that students shattered windows at the administration building, overturned cars and destroyed school equipment. Shengda's failure to award graduates with diplomas from more prestigious Zhengzhou University, with which Shengda is affiliated, touched off the demonstrations, Wenxue City and other foreign and Hong Kong media outlets reported. The reports noted that Shengda students had paid premium tuitions based on promises of a Zhengzhou University degree. The Wenxue site ran dramatic photos showing a bank with its windows smashed, vandalized cars and courtyards full of debris.

Comment

-----

[1](#)3. (C) While the details remain sketchy, student anger over perceived fraud/mistreatment by university officials appears to have touched off the violence in this case. The proliferation of "branch schools" (ref C) combined with official crackdowns on diploma issuance have caused similar tensions and problems at other schools, as students vying for employment in a tight job market demand that their diplomas match earlier commitments made by school administrators. It is not clear how the situation in Zhengzhou was allowed to get so out of hand, but the incident will likely serve to reinforce official Chinese

views on the dangers of student protests.  
RANDT